

**REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 11, 2012**

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Washington, Georgia, held their regular monthly meeting on Monday, June 11, 2012, beginning at 6 PM at the Edward Pope Conference Center. Mayor Ames Barnett presided.

Present were: Mayor Barnett, council members Armour, Cullars, Harris, Rainey, Scarborough and Tutt. Also present were City Administrator Eskew, City Clerk Danner, City Attorney Fleming and Police Chief Glenn.

Visitors present are listed in the Work Session held on June 11, 2012.

Rev. G.L. Avery opened the meeting in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES APPROVED: On motion by Cullars, second by Harris, council approved 6 to 0 the minutes of the work session and regular meetings held on May 14, 2012.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVED: On motion by Cullars, second by Harris, council approved 6 to 0 the meeting agenda adding an executive session for personnel and one legal matter to follow at the conclusion of the regular meeting.

CHAMBER REPORT: Chamber Director Mrs. Jenny Clarke advised that donations are still needed for the fireworks display on July 3rd. There is a June 19th deadline for vendor applications for this event.

Mrs. Clarke also advised of SBDC free consultations with small business owners to be held on July 17th.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES: David Jenkins advised that several local industries are in the planning stages of expansion and he is also working with some industrial prospects. Jenkins also advised that a recent USDA site inspection passed and that the Athens Tech Career Center is moving forward.

RESOLUTION – SECTION 533 HOUSING PRESERVATION GRANT: David Jenkins asked that council approve the filing of an application for a Section 533 Housing Preservation Grant. On motion by Cullars, second by Tutt, council approved 6 to 0 the filing of the grant application. Resolution follows:

WHEREAS, the governing body of the City of Washington authorizes the filing of a 2012 Section 533 Housing Preservation Grant to the Department of USDA Rural Development, including all understandings and assurances contained therein; and,

WHEREAS, the governing body directs and authorizes the Mayor of the City of Washington to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as may be required; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Washington has provided citizens an adequate opportunity to participate in the development of the application by holding at least one public hearing in the locality before submission of the application; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Washington maintains files that contain documentary evidence that the hearing was held. Also, that the evidence includes a copy of the actual notice of public hearing; and,

WHEREAS, the citizen participation process meets the requirements of the USDA Rural Development regulations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Washington do hereby authorize the filing of a Section 533 Housing Preservation Grant to the Department of the USDA Rural Development, by the deadline of June 25, 2012.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor of the City of Washington is authorized to complete and sign all documents necessary to submit a full application for funding.

Adopted this 11th day of June, 2012.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Chief Glenn reported on several programs that the Police Department is currently participating in—100 Days of Summer, HEAT and Click-It-Or-Ticket. Council member Tutt

expressed some concern on where some of these stops are taking place and how they are handled by the officers. Chief Glenn reviews video tapes on a daily basis and believes that the officers are handling stops correctly.

WILDLIFE ACTION SPORTING CLAY SHOOT: Ronnie Huffman advised of a Sporting Clay Shoot to be held on June 30th beginning at 10 AM. Cost is \$25 for 100 clays. Huffman challenged those present to participate and test their skills against local law enforcement personnel.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS: Debbie Anderson with the Voter Registrar's Office encouraged citizens to correctly request absentee ballots for the upcoming elections—county, state and federal. The city will send letters to those affected by the recent city re-districting after the November general elections.

CLARA SUTTON-REQUEST USE OF SQUARE: Ms. Sutton requested use of the square on September 8, 2012, for a music extravaganza. Cullars made a motion to approve request, with a second by Tutt. Discussion followed that this is the same day that the Memory Lane Cruisers hold their cruise-in. Harris made a motion with a second by Scarborough to table this request until the July meeting of council.

TOURISM REPORT – ERIN POLLOCK: Ms. Pollock reported on the number of visitors to Washington during May—there were three groups of 40 or more persons. Pollock also noted that some \$2000 is still needed for the July 3 fireworks.

Council asked Ms. Pollock about the Tourism budget and where advertising dollars are spent. Ms. Pollock will provide council with this breakdown in future meetings.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS: Mayor Barnett thanked the Citizens Review Panel for their report and encouraged citizens to contact the panel with concerns at citizensreviewpanel@gmail.com. Mayor Barnett also reported on the importance of TSPLOST for economic development in Washington.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

CULLARS: On behalf of the Electric Committee, Council member Cullars made a motion to amend Section 82-12(a) of the Code of Ordinances changing the current penalty rate for late payment from 10% to 7% and further to amend cut-off policy to waive re-connection fees for customers 65 years of age or older and to increase re-connection fees to \$75 during business hours and \$125 after business hours; and stipulated that a utility bill must be in a senior citizens name for a period of one year for the waiver of re-connection fees to apply. Council member Rainey seconded the motion and council approved the motion 6 to 0.

TUTT: Council member Tutt thanked David Jenkins for his hard work on Economic Development efforts. Tutt further advised that May Sallie's Diner is now opened under new management and encouraged everyone to support this business.

RAINEY: Council member Rainey asked that the Chamber, Tourism and Main Street offices work together so that all up-coming events are known by all offices.

HARRIS: Council member Harris reported that he had done some preliminary work on reviewing the status of outstanding city taxes. He requested that the Mayor appoint two council members to work with him on recommendations for some housekeeping/cleanup of taxes. Council members Scarborough and Tutt volunteered to serve on this committee.

Harris asked for a list of vacancies on various boards, commissions and authorities.

Harris also asked for a called meeting for the council to discuss what direction the Pope Center should be headed in.

REPORT FROM CITY ADMINISTRATOR: City Administrator Eskew advised that there are some 29 children taking swimming lessons at the pool. Adult swimming will begin on July 3rd for each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 5:30 to 7:30 PM.

Administrator Eskew asked for council approval of a MEAG Resolution naming voting delegate and alternate voting delegate for the July 2012 MEAG Annual Board Election meeting . The proposed voted is Mayor Barnett and alternate is City Administrator Eskew. On motion by Scarborough, second by Armour to approve resolution naming Mayor and Administrator as voter and alternate, council approved request 3-3-1. Council members Cullars, Rainey and Tutt voted against the motion. Mayor Barnett voted for the motion breaking the tie vote.

MAYOR’S CLOSING COMMENTS: Mayor Barnett encouraged council members to submit names to be considered for appointments to boards, commissions and authorities prior to the July meeting of council.

Mayor Barnett also asked that those owing taxes to either make full payment or to work out a payment plan with the city business office. After proper notification, all outstanding taxes will be turned over to Appalachian Mountain Services, Inc. for collection.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: On motion by Cullars, second by Tutt, council approved 6 to 0 to enter into a previously approved executive session to discuss one personnel and one legal matter.

On motion by Harris, second by Cullars, council approved 6 to 0 re-convening in open session.

City Attorney Fleming reported that one personnel matter and one legal matter were discussed with no final action being taken.

On motion by Cullars, second by Harris, council approved 6 to 0 to have Mayor Barnett sign an executive session affidavit.

ADJOURNMENT: On motion by Cullars, second by Harris, council approved 6 to 0 adjournment at 7:30 PM.

_____MAYOR

_____CLERK